

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

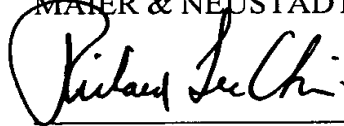
Claim 15 has been canceled. Claims 1, 3-14 and 16 are active. No new matter is believed to be added by entry of the amendment.

Applicants thank Examiner Habte for the indication of allowability in Claims 1, 3-14 and 16. Applicants also thank the Examiner for indicating that Claim 15 is patentably distinct from the remaining pending claims. Claim 15 has now been canceled and Applicants reserve the right to pursue this canceled claim in one or more divisional applications.

Applicants also thank the Examiner for acknowledging their claim for foreign priority and for indicating that the foreign priority documents have been received. Applicants thank the Examiner for considering all the Information Disclosure Statements submitted to date. This case is now in condition for allowance, and the Examiner is kindly requested to pass this case to issue.

Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,
MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.



Norman F. Oblon
Attorney of Record
Registration No. 24,618

Vincent K. Shier, Ph.D.
Registration No. 50,552

Customer Number

22850

Tel: (703) 413-3000
Fax: (703) 413 -2220
(OSMMN 08/03)
JKP:smi

Richard L. Chinn, Ph.D.
Registration No. 34,305